

**Background Candidates SLT Election**  
**PTA General Meeting June 4, 2008 8:30 a.m. to 9:20 a.m.**

1. **Name:** Klara Carmes (Parent 1<sup>st</sup> Grade)  
**Candidate Statement:** I have been a grade representative since my child was in pre-kindergarten. Why I want to be on the PS261 SLT: I would like to get involved in a different capacity but continue my involvement in the Annual Spring Auction.
  
2. **Name:** Monica Christensen (1<sup>st</sup> Grade)  
**Candidate Statement:** I have had children at PS 261 since September 2000. Being part of the PS 261 community has given me so much joy in that time. I have so appreciated the hard work of the faculty and staff, and feel they have enriched my children's lives immeasurably. I have a doctorate in education, and I would be honored to put the skills I have to work for PS 261.
  
3. **Name:** Rachel Godsil (Parent for Grade(s): K & 3)  
**Candidate Statement:** I have been a PS 261 parent and active PTA member for the past four years. I have two daughters, Kate, in 3rd grade, and Rebecca, in kindergarten. Along with being a PS 261 parent, I am a law professor at Seton Hall University Law School where I have been teaching for the past 8 years. Before teaching, I practiced law in New York City for 8 years as a civil rights lawyer and an Assistant United States Attorney.  
Why I want to be on the PS261 SLT: PS 261 embodies the best of public education. Our school is fortunate to be led by Zip and Lena, our children are inspired every day by devoted and skilled teachers, and we have a terrific group of engaged parents. We are also working hard to improve our school -- and I would like to be part of the SLT's efforts. I have devoted years of study to reducing the achievement gap among children to make sure that all children are achieving to their full potential. I hope to contribute to the SLT's work in this area while I am on leave from teaching this next year. I am also very interested in efforts to facilitate effective communication between the school, parents, and the broader community.
  
4. **Name:** Elisa Wallman Jacques (Parent for Grade(s): K & 3)  
**Candidate Statement:** Next year I will have two children at PS 261, Kindergarten and 3rd grade. I have made a commitment to myself that I will take on a more active role in the school next year as I will have more time to devote.  
My background is in social work, and for the past 18 years I have worked at a not for profit health care center where I am the Director of Community Programs - I am responsible for management of our Health Care for the Homeless Program and administer our grant funded programs for people with HIV/AIDS.  
Why I want to be on the PS261 SLT: I have been pleased with the education my son has received so far at PS261 and have been impressed with the motivation and enthusiasm of his teachers. I would like to have the opportunity to be part of the process that sets goals for the school and helps define priorities for our kids. Given the overriding pressure of "testing", I would like to see teacher's have the opportunity to use as much of their youthful creativity as possible and still stay on the required track. Nothing can ensure burnout more than to take young, enthusiastic, smart teachers, and not allow them to use their creative teaching skills and make them feel confined to a static curriculum. I would also like to see more developed with regards to the enrichment program. I know there were plans for enrichment via Ms. Becky this year, but I am not sure if those plans really came to fruition. For children who can benefit from enrichment in certain subjects, I think this is really important to offer and will ensure that our children excel and do not get bored.